



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING

April 13, 2010

Mayor Wright called the meeting to order at 8:46 PM in the Council Chambers of the Newington Town Hall.

I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – waived (recited at Public Hearing)

II ROLL CALL

Councilors Present:

Councilor Banach
Councilor Casasanta
Councilor Cohen
Councilor Klett
Councilor Lenares
Councilor McBride
Councilor Nagel
Council Nasinnyk
Mayor Wright

Staff Present

John Salomone, Town Manager
Ann Harter, Finance Director
Lisa Rydecki, Asst. Finance Director
Jaime Trevethan, Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager
Mary Richard, Council Clerk

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dwayne Thomas, 401 ?? - thanked everyone for their consideration of the project and says that they are taking another stab at getting the field.

Roland Bishop, 42 Woods Way - thanked the Council for their consideration for the field, following up would like to see a good faith effort to use the grant money to establish a true figure for a functional field, not a \$1.6 million field and again those costs would come in south of \$900,000 but we don't know that. He believes in a few more years time Newington will need more fields, not less.

Mady Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive - she has not changed her mind on the turf field. She thinks there's been a lot lost on the acrimony that has gone on regarding two of the Councilors and their ability to be ethical. They are exemplary people and this should not have become an issue at all. She strongly urges as a statement of our commitment to our children that education is absolute paramount, and the entire Board of Education budget should be funded as is.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive - as a life long resident of Newington, the efforts of the teachers of this Town

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should be available to the children of this Town as was available to her daughter. There's a lot of talk about the children deserving more than they had, and she believes that her daughter did receive more. If it's a choice between artificial turf and books, my vote would be for education.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Adjustments to the Town Council's Tentative Budget

Item #	Account #	Description	Change in Tax Burden
1	10140 8220	Increase for Unofficial Checkers for Nov. General Election	\$5,760
2	10644 8103	Increase Senior & Disabled Part Time for setup person	\$6,000
3	11100 8501	Add Clem Lemire Synthetic Turf Field	\$250,000
4	11100 8502	Eliminate Town Hall Improvements Lower Level	(\$51,400)
5	11100 8501	Reduce Road Resurfacing	(\$150,000)
6	11100 8501	Reduce Information Technology Reserve	(\$48,600)
TOTAL			\$11,760

Item 1 - Councilor Klett moved to Increase the Unofficial Checkers for November General Election for \$2,880. Councilor Banach moved to adjust the amount to be \$ 5,760.

This increase is for both parties to have equal rights to encourage voters to come out for the vote. Councilor Casasanta seconded with the change – Vote 9 – 0

Item 2 – Increase Senior & Disabled Part Time for setup person

Councilor Klett moved for an addition of \$6,000 - Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk - Mr. Salomone said that when doing some changes in central maintenance function he had centralized one person in the Library, then reconsidered and kept that person in the Library and did not add the Senior Center. Councilor Cohen said that this was a concern at the Senior Center on how they would manage the cleaning service. She said that if the cleaning service is not satisfactory there should be a different cleaning service. Councilor Nagel agrees with Councilor Cohen, in that this was a concern at the Library.

Vote - 9 – 0

Item 3 – Add Clem Lemire Synthetic Turf Field

Councilor Klett moved to increase the amount to \$250,000 – Seconded by Councilor Nagel

Item 4 – Eliminate Town Hall Improvements Lower Level

Councilor Klett moved to decrease the amount by \$51,400 Seconded by Councilor McBride

Item 5 – Reduce Road Resurfacing

Councilor Klett moved to reduce the road resurfacing by \$150,000 – Seconded by Councilor McBride

Item 6 – Reduce Information Technology Reserve

Councilor Klett moved to reduce by \$48,600 – Seconded by Councilor Lenares

Discussion – Items 3 thru 6

Councilor Klett said that at that time she did not have enough information, she went through numbers with Councilor Lenares and explain things to me, that this project can be done at less than originally anticipated. It is in the master Parks & Rec plan a couple of years ago. Just like the Board of Education budget and listening to the people tonight, it's all about supporting the children and she was impressed with the number of people who are in support of this project. She was invited to walk the field which made a tremendous difference in my opinion as to what I needed to do tonight, seeing the condition of the field and the parents who deserve so much

credit. By supporting this she stated that there is money in the CIP budget plan to add some funds to show a commitment to the youth and sports that we are truly behind that the grant gets utilized, that the field gets fixed and we address the needs. It's important to point out that there are numerous studies, that state that the participation in athletics can help students in discipline, set goals etc. and she believes that she owes it to the children in this Town to help make that happen. Councilor Cohen said that there is a \$500,000 grant to be put into the artificial turf field. This does not mean that if we don't add to the grant, that we're not accepting the grant. We will not be losing the grant, we will be using it and it is not necessary to add additional funding. A plan is in the works for establishing a Project Building Committee for the artificial turf field using that grant. She is opposed to adding additional Town funding. Councilor Klett makes it clear that she is not suggesting that we add another \$250,000, but to put it to work a bit earlier. Councilor Nasinnyk said that we've received some communication from Sandy Navis, our State Representative stating that ...'this email is a follow up to your telephone call late Friday expressing concern about the possible loss of the \$500,000 State grant that was awarded to Newington on July 16, 2009. She spoke with Lisa Moody, Chief of Staff, and Lisa assured me that this grant was not in danger of being pulled back. Lisa would be happy to speak with anyone directly. Secondly, she said that the CIP committee is charged with recommending to the Town Council how the funds are to be spent for the next year. As the Mayor showed in his presentation on the budget, that significant money has been set aside for economic development in the Town. She feels that there are other projects that should be considered and that extra money should not go into this project at this time and will not be voting for this project, next year yes, but not at this time. Councilor Lenares thanked Councilor Klett for taking the extra steps in looking closer at this project. He said that starting at \$1,117,000 for the synthetic turf field, he backed out certain things that are not necessary, one being sidewalks and player benches, leaving \$1,052,000 then he said he took out \$205,000 regarding site preparation, removed excavation of material, transporting that off site was another \$150,000, leaving \$847,000. Going forward this brings it to \$692,000. He suggested that \$250,000 might be a little short, it's a starting point, and there's always a big wish list. Right now we're not using this field, and by having a synthetic field in place we have the ability to rotate different fields. Another concern that in walking that field with Councilor McBride, there is a considerable amount of geese droppings. He's sure this is the right movement. Councilor Banach said that in working with the CIP, with Councilor Nasinnyk they went through different areas and needs of different department, we were the party that took action on this in committing \$890,000 to this project, he says that it is not a fact that we're losing the grant. We were assured that we would not be losing the grant. We have not established a building committee; we intend to establish a building committee which would be charged with looking into the various bids etc. We are not in receipt of a Department of Environmental Protection report of independent testing, so it seems that we have put everything in place, have made the commitment so he will not be supporting on the basis of there being other needs mentioned. He proposes that we put money aside for open space in the amount of \$50,000 or \$100,000 that did not get support. His point is that everything happens at the cost of something else. He thinks that we are well prepared to initiate this field on the spend-down of the \$500,000 and that we will continue with the \$890,000 in the next fiscal year. Councilor McBride stated that the question comes down to do we commit some of the money now or all of it later. He will support the motion after speaking with a lot of people, the main reason being that football requires a lot of players with a lot of people involved, which does involve many other aspects. He said that a lot of sports will be utilizing the field and it's much more than just football. He will support it this year with the money that's available then take the next step forward. Being a first time Councilor he hasn't heard a lot of discussion on this subject which made it difficult to make a decision. Had he not gone out and talked with people about it, he would be questioning why spend this money on a field instead of on books. He stated that safety was a major concern and he found that the fibers of the field are major fibers used in carpeting and water bottles. He believes that this is a great move for the Town. With some investigation he feels that it seems to be fairly cost neutral, and the money we spend maintaining this field will be to our advantage. Councilor Cohen stated that adding Town funds to the \$500,000 grant will not make the spending the grants go any quicker. The \$500,000 will be spent as needed to do the work of the project building committee, and adding funds will not make that \$500,000 be spent any quicker. Councilor Casasanta stated that she has always supported this project, safety being paramount and type of sporting activity, and anything we can do to make Newington more attractive to other people we should think about that, looking at it with pride. This is a great and opportunity for Newington to grow and she is very supportive of it. Councilor Nagel also adds that the use of the field adds an educational experience outside the school system and as demonstrated here, you can't put a price tag on education. You really can't underestimate the life experiences and education experiences that come from the kinds of events that will occur on this field, as well as the safety factor. Councilor Klett noted that the message from Lisa Moody, who is the Chief of Staff of the Governor who will not be there in November, she's not sure that Lisa Moody will be there in November and she would be more comfortable knowing that an agency in the State had indicated that this grant is safe, not Lisa Moody. In terms of the CIP committee, there are five members of that committee, Councilor Nasinnyk, Chair, Councilor Banach, Mr. Woods, Councilor Lenares and Mr. Carson, it just so happens that Mr. Woods, Councilor Lenares and Mr. Carson all support rearranging the

funds to take the \$250,000. Secondly she said that it's not uncommon that the CIP committee is an advisory committee to the Town Council, which does not mean that what the CIP committee says that this is what we want to do, that the majority of the Town Council is obligated to do that. There are nine members on the Council and with all different opinions and hopefully everyone has done their homework, whatever side we come down on this will be because we truly believe we're doing the right thing, and she will support it. Councilor Cohen asked if there is any question about losing the \$500,000 grant how adding Town funds to the project will affect losing or not losing the grant. If we spend the grant, it's spent. If there's any move that will force us to lose the grant before it's spent, adding Town funds will not save it. She feels we should use that grant that we have now and then worry about adding to it in the following year's budget. Adding to it now is not needed. Mayor Wright added that no one knows the future of this grant, and if the current budget wasn't in a deficit of over \$700,000 and next year's budget, they're looking at a \$4 billion deficit he doesn't believe that anything is status quo. You compound the fact that this \$500,000 grant was one of many projects passed by the bonding commission, we in Connecticut have the highest per capita debt in the United States. We're in danger of getting down graded and it looks like we have one of the worst bond ratings in the Country. We have an election in November, and he has full faith in the Governor and Lisa Moody that they do support this project at this time, but with a new Governor next January; this grant might be in danger. He believes there are a lot of people who want to pull back on a lot of grants that have been authorized by the bonding commission. If we move forward and go under the assumption that this grant will be there next year, that's fine, but we have a recession, we can get good pricing and if we just go with the building committee now and not commit any additional funds we will not be sure to have enough money to get the turf field done. If we start with this building committee, he feels there's a lot of momentum from the public and the Council to move with urgency, a lot of planning done and get this project out to bid. With the project out to bid he believe that we have a 50/50 chance that we can get the actual turf down to less than \$750,000 or in that neighborhood. There's also a chance it might be higher, and we've been advised of that by our Town Manager, he thinks it will be more than that. If we move ahead using good pricing and perhaps using some of our Town crews and get created, we can get this project done. He believes that everyone on this Council will feel terrible if we lose that \$500,000 grant. It won't be done for \$500,000 for sure, maybe will get it done for \$750,000, maybe not but we'll have a fighting chance and if they start pulling grants in February, and we don't have more money to get it done, we'll definitely lose the majority of this grant. He can foresee going out to bid in a number of months. He supports this and if this doesn't work and we don't get the field done for \$750,000 we haven't spent the money, it's still in reserve. He appreciates the bipartisan support on this at this time.

The Mayor called for a roll call vote on

Item 3

Councilor Banach – no

Councilor Casasanta – yes

Councilor Cohen – no

Councilor Klett – yes

Councilor Lenares – yes

Councilor McBride – yes

Councilor Nagel – yes

Councilor Nasinnyk – no

Mayor Wright – yes

Vote passes 6 yes 3 no

Item 4

Councilor Banach – no

Councilor Casasanta – yes

Councilor Cohen – no

Councilor Klett – yes

Councilor Lenares – yes

Councilor McBride – yes

Councilor Nagel – yes

Councilor Nasinnyk – no

Mayor Wright – yes

Vote passes 6 yes 3 no

Item 5

Councilor Banach – no

Councilor Casasanta – yes

Councilor Cohen – no
Councilor Klett – yes
Councilor Lenares – yes
Councilor McBride – yes
Councilor Nagel – yes
Councilor Nasinnyk – no
Mayor Wright – yes
Vote passes 6 yes 3 no

Item 6
Councilor Banach – no
Councilor Casasanta – yes
Councilor Cohen – no
Councilor Klett – yes
Councilor Lenares – yes
Councilor McBride – yes
Councilor Nagel – yes
Councilor Nasinnyk – no
Mayor Wright – yes
Vote passes 6 yes 3 no

Mayor Wright read an email (attached) from resident Robert Briggaman regarding the Board of Education budget.

V CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Establish Project Building Committee: Artificial Turf Field Project

Councilor Lenares asked Mr. Salomone if by setting up this building committee is there a certain number of members that we have. Mr. Salomone said that he recommends five because it's a manageable number and closer to what others have done. The Council can decide how many members. Councilor Banach requested a seven member committee: three from the public, two from Town Council and two from Parks & Rec. Councilor Cohen asked the makeup of the committee for the Clem Lemire field project.

B. Recycling Containers Tax Exempt Lease Purchase Financing

Finance Director Ann Harter requested action on this tonight.

Mayor Wright asked for a motion to waive the rules to move on the action tonight.

Councilor Banach moved to waive the rules - Seconded by Councilor Casasanta Vote 9 – 0

Councilor Casasanta moved the following:

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT TO ACQUIRE RECYCLING CONTAINERS

WHEREAS, the Town of Newington, Connecticut (the "Town") issued a Request for Proposals for lease purchase financing for the acquisition of automated recycling containers (the "Equipment"); and

WHEREAS, Chase Equipment Finance, Inc. (the "Lessor") submitted the lowest responsible bid to lease the Equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Town desires to acquire the Equipment and enter into a lease purchase agreement with the Lessor to finance the acquisition of the Equipment.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

(1) That (i) the acceptance of the bid proposal of the Lessor to lease the Equipment and finance the acquisition of the Equipment is hereby ratified and (ii) the Town Manager is hereby authorized to enter into a lease purchase agreement (the "Lease") by and between the Town and the Lessor for the lease of the Equipment for a period of no more than five (5) years, in such form and

having such terms and details as determined by the Town Manager, subject to the following limitations. The amount to be financed under the Lease shall be no greater than \$525,000 payable in semi-annual installments at an interest rate of approximately 2.58%. At the conclusion of the term of the Lease, provided all the payments required under the Lease, including payments of rent, have been made, the Town may purchase the Equipment for an amount not to exceed \$1.00. Payments in respect of the Lease shall be subject to annual appropriations of the Town. The Lease shall include a "non-appropriation of funds" clause allowing for termination in the event that sufficient funds are not appropriated to make payments of rent and other amounts each fiscal year.

(2) That the Town Manager is hereby authorized to make such representations and covenants and to execute and deliver such contracts, financing statements, affidavits, agreements and documents, including but not limited to, an escrow agreement and a tax compliance certificate, as are determined by the Town Manager to be necessary or desirable to evidence and secure the Town's obligations pursuant to the Lease, to ensure the interest paid on the Lease is free from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and to finance the purchase of the Equipment, and that the execution of such contracts, financing statements, affidavits, agreements and documents shall be conclusive evidence of such determination.

(3) That the Town Manager, the Director of Finance and other proper officers of the Town, or any one of them as appropriate, are hereby authorized to appoint a bank or trust company to act as escrow agent in connection with the foregoing lease purchase transaction and to do or cause to be done any and all other acts and things necessary or proper to further the purposes of this resolution and the terms and obligations in respect of the Lease.

(4) That the Town reasonably expects to incur expenditures (the "Expenditures") in connection with the project for which a general functional description is provided above. The Town reasonably expects to reimburse itself for the cost of such Expenditures with the proceeds of the obligation described above. The maximum principal amount of such obligation is not expected to exceed \$525,000. This declaration of official intent is a declaration of official intent made pursuant to Treasury Regulation Section 1.150.

SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk

VOTE: 9 - 0

C. Fair Housing Policy

Mr. Salomone said that each year we have to renew our Fair Housing Policy, an important criteria for the Town when we use that along with others for applications for Federal and State funding. This certifies that the Town practices and follows the principles of the Fair Housing standards. There will be a resolution for Council consideration at the next meeting.

VI RESIGNATION / APPOINTMENTS

Councilor Banach moved the following appointment:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointments:

7. Employee Insurance and Pension Benefits Committee

9 members, 2 alternates, 2 year term
 Party Max.: 6
 Remaining members: 3 Rep., 4 Dem.
 Remaining Alternates: 1 Rep.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Terry Sullivan	188 Forest Drive	D	IMMED-11/30/11	Mike Longo (Term exp. 11/30/09)

Seconded by Councilor Casasanta - Vote 9 – 0

VII MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Councilor Nagel stated that he will be abstaining from voting on any meetings that he missed – March 17 thru March 23, 2010.

Councilor Nasinnyk asked that we postpone this item for the meeting on April 27, 2010. The Council agreed by consensus to table the items until the next regular meeting.

VIII WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC.

- A. Town Manager Reports – Mr. Salomone stated that he would present his report at the meeting on April 27, 2010.

IX. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Cohen stated that the Senior Center is planning their dinner in May and also the Chamber Annual dinner and also planning their 25th anniversary and will be planning an event.

The Youth/Adult Council recently held a very effective and interesting program inviting parents to come with regards to internet usage. They're planning to segregate the program and do their own in house with something to present on our Newington TV because of so little attendance at the first program.

Councilor Nagel also attended the Senior and Disabled meeting and a few things came up. He was asked to share with the Council, that they are concerned with the size of the phone number for calling for those who can't see well, reminded me to convey to you about ADA stating that there should be large print for any Council information and listening devices should be available at Council meetings. They also discussed the microphone sound system in both chambers.

He also attended the Library board meeting last night, the book sale is April 30, May 1 and May 2 and cannot accept any more donations after the 19th of this month. They wanted to make sure that this Council was thanked profusely for putting funds back in to assure that the Library will continue to be open. Also he commented that Community TV was to have an open house this week-end, but have postponed that to some time in mid May.

Councilor McBride stated that the Downtown Revitalization Committee had their first meeting last week and was very productive and the second meeting will be on April 19th and everyone is invited to come down and express their concerns about the parking lot and Market Square.

Councilor Klett attended the Fire Department's Commissioners meeting and they extended their thanks to the Council for putting back the money for uniforms. They're putting together plans for a spaghetti dinner, she is not sure of the date but it is available on their web site.

X PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive – would like to know how to get more than four minutes at the podium, and noticed that one speaker had nearly four minutes. She suggested that perhaps the emails being read can be read during public participation and timed so we all have a fair advantage. She congratulates the Midget Football win which goes to show what you can do if you have friends in the right places. She needs someone to speak to the Park & Rec Department about the New Meadow pathway. She said that she's been trying for two years to get someone to take responsibility for the maintenance of that area. The work was done but the answer that she got was not acceptable, being "we'll get to it but right now our main focus is on the baseball field". The only maintenance has been by the people in the neighborhood and the Boy Scout troops, and recently she received a letter from a Boy Scout working his Eagle badge requesting help in cleaning up the pathway. She is requesting that instead of spending millions of dollars to repair what we have let go, just give the parks and grounds some money for more personnel, more materials to maintain what we have we might not have the situation we have now.

Jennifer Cleveland (unknown) thanks to the Council for all they do for not only Clem Lemire but for everything you have to do and as a fellow volunteer she says 'thank you'.

Don Woods, 82 Ivy Lane – Vice Chair, Parks & Rec – thanks the Councilors who made a decision tonight to support the field and respects the decisions of those who couldn't make that decision. The Parks & Rec board will meet next week and he's sure they will take the proper steps needed to get to the Council and agrees with Councilor Banach that he would like to see a seven member building committee, which would better represent all parties concerned.

XI REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Nagel remembered regarding the Commission on Senior and Disabled that they had also requested that they get more information on the progress of Samaritan.

Councilor Casasanta wanted to make a correction in that she did not ask either Councilors Banach or Nasinnyk to make a full disclosure of their finances. She stated that Section 32-5 was being presented in the interest of full disclosure.

Mayor Wright – thanked everyone who spoke on the Board of Education budget and the synthetic turf field. Obviously lots of different opinions and he respects everyone's input. There will be voting on the budget on Thursday, with a special meeting at 5:30 PM for that purpose. He thinks there are a lot of positives in this budget but he can't support a 2 ¾% tax increase for the people of Newington. The overall increase in this budget goes to the Board of Education in the neighborhood of \$1,700,00, and looking at that increase, all the money is going to the teachers and this budget is not about the kids. He thinks in these times the teachers should be giving some of their massive pay increases back. So many people haven't seen any increase, and as a business owner he's seen his business contract and assets, retirement shrinking because of the market. The teachers increase on average is 5.6% which represents \$1,300,000 of the 1.7 million dollars increase to the Board of Education budget. The remainder goes to the health benefits provided to the teachers and other Board of Education employees. That increase represent a 2% tax increase for you and me and he doesn't thinks that's fair, and he wants to correct the record Dr. Finklestein in that he represented that the top pay was somewhere in the \$90,000 range for teachers, which is incorrect. Our top teacher this year at Chaffee School is making \$101,000 in the fall that teach will be making \$104,000. Our teachers are very well paid in this Town but this 5.6% increase in their pay at the expense to tax payers. There will be 64 teachers next year making over \$90,000, 97 teachers will be making \$80,000 to \$89,000. 45% of our teachers will have a salary greater than \$80,000. On the other end, we have new teachers, 34 will be making less than \$50,000.

XII EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: PERSONNEL/LAND ACQUISITION

Councilor Casasanta moved to go into to Executive Session at 10:30 PM – Seconded by Councilor Lenares. Vote 9 – 0. Town Manager Salomone, all Councilors, Town Planner Ed Meehan Open Space Committee Chair Tom Bowen and various members of the Open Space Committee were present.

Councilor Lenares moved to adjourn the Executive Session at 11:20 PM – Seconded by Councilor Nagel – Vote 9 – 0

XIII ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn the Special Meeting at 11:21 PM - Seconded by Councilor Lenares
Vote 9 - 0

Submitted Respectfully,

Mary Richard
Clerk of the Council